



**Flowers & Bouquet Making**  
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*Join us for tips on choosing foraged vs. cultivated flowers, the vase life and handling of different varieties as well as how to make a beautiful bouquet. Participants can make their own mini-bouquet to take home!*

### **Working With Flowers...Why?**

- To attract pollinators, as a trap crop, as companion plants
- Aesthetics
- Joy
- Income opportunity
- Farm diversification

### **Foraged vs. Cultivated Flowers**

- Some of my favourites include zinnias, tansy, ageratum, millet, columbine, yarrow, and monarda. What are some of your own blooming favourites?
- Harvesting both cultivated and foraged varieties provides a longer harvest season, more diversity and a wider selection than what is in the garden, and can help fill gaps in your garden plan, or make up for crop failure.
- Annuals, self-seeding annuals, perennials
- Planning and starting cultivated flowers takes time, effort, and planning. Foraging for flowers requires much less equipment. It doesn't even require that you have a garden! All you need is to be curious, look differently at "ditch flowers" and take some time to explore the road sides around where you live or travel.

### **Care and Handling of Your Cut Flowers**

- If you're looking to have cut flowers last in bouquets, most need to be cut before they are fully in bloom. However for best results, make sure to look up the best time to harvest each type you want to cut.
- It is best to harvest when it is dry and cool - this usually means in the morning after the dew has come off the plants.
- When cutting, look for long stems. This will give you the best options for bouquet making. You can always cut them shorter, but once cut they can't be made longer! Straight stems are often desirable, but some beautiful and creative arrangements can be made with all kinds of wonky cuts.

- “Storage” conditions: once your flowers are cut, they will begin to expire. For best results, they should be kept in a dark, cool, and well-ventilated space until they go into a bouquet to be displayed. Surprisingly, direct sun and wind are bad for cut flowers.
- Vase life: You can usually get at least 5-7 days from cut flowers. This can be extended by trimming the stems and changing the water daily or every other day. In addition to this, there are many “home remedies” you can add to the water to try to boost the blooms. Some of these include a penny, bleach, cider vinegar, sprite, baking soda, and more!

### **Bouquet Design and Construction**

- Design: When building a bouquet I like to think about colour, texture, and shape. I try to use an assortment of all 3, and bring things together that compliment each other. Design and beauty are very subjective things, so try not to get caught up with any rules, but try putting things together that are striking to your eye. I usually pick a colour scheme, a feature flower, some highlights, and some filler.
- Structure: try starting with the largest physical element in your bouquet. I like to add a few “highlights” around that, than gradually add more filler and other flowers til the size and look suits me. This technique usually makes things easier to manage in your hand, and build a well-balanced show of blooms :)
- Tying your bouquet may not be needed, if it’s going straight into a vase. If it does need to be held together, you can use an elastic band (but just make sure it’s not too tight!!!) or a length of twine or string.

Next time you’re out in the garden or just out-and-about, I hope that you’ll consider adding new varieties to your selection of cut flowers. However you’re able to bring these blooms into your surroundings, hopefully these tips and tricks bring you success and joy!

